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March 16, 2016

NEWS RELEASE

EPFD responds to HazMat incident

Firefighters respond to HazMat incident at 1600 block of Texas Ave.

El Paso, Texas – At approximately 10:53 p.m. on Tuesday March 15, the El Paso Fire Department was dispatched to a Hazardous Material incident at the 1600 block of Texas Ave. when employees of a nearby business smelled ammonia and called 9-1-1. Upon arriving on the scene at 11:00 p.m., crews encountered a heavy ammonia smell coming from the vicinity. The HazMat Taskforce was immediately dispatched and firefighters began to evacuate employees of the nearby business.

At approximately 1:49 a.m., firefighters were able to safely stop the ammonia leak by using the building's manual shut-off valves. Crews continued to monitor the two affected buildings for dangerous ammonia levels. Evacuated employees were allowed to return to the buildings at approximately 5:07 a.m.

There were no injuries to employees or fire personnel. A total of 15 units and 40 personnel from the El Paso Fire Department responded to this incident. El Paso Police, Sun Metro and the El Paso Health Department assisted in this incident.

The El Paso Fire Department would like to remind residents to call 9-1-1 if they encounter unknown substances or chemicals. Residents should not attempt to identify the substance by touching it, smelling it or tasting it. Instead, evacuate the area, move upwind if possible and call 9-1-1. If it is safe to do so, notify people in nearby buildings.

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